

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP



A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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No. 216

TO RECKLESS RALPH, THE SLEUTH OF THE SIERRAS

by J. P. Quaine

139 Commercial Road, South Yarra
Victoria, Australia

Sept. 14th, 1945

Dear Blood Brother.

Through the kindness of Blood Brother Leon Stone, I have had the pleasure of perusing the two issues of your periodical which contained the learned dissertation upon Bracebridge Heming, by W. M. Burns. (The articles came out in Roundup in parts 1 and 2, May and June 1945, and this article should have followed it, but was misplaced. Sorry this happened, but better late than never.—Editor.) I dare-say I should commence this letter with Paws across the Pacific, old Pal, or words to that effect, and congratulate each other on our recent victory. But we have more important matters to discuss—we old uns who live in a world of the unreal. I am most grateful to Mr. Stone for enabling me to read the stuff above alluded to; and thankful also to you and Mr. Burns for being the givers of the feast in the first place. However, as Mr. Burns mentioned that he would be glad of any corrections, may I, in all humility offer one or two?

The idea seems to be that Heming wrote the Scapegrace Series in America, or that they were published in that country first. Mention is made of them having appeared as early as 1873 in an American paper. But the series had been published in England during 1872 and 1873, and began the penny number run in 1874, the serial run in the Young Men of Great Brit-

ain having concluded about November 1873. I take the following advertisement from my Volume XI of the Boys of England: "On March 25th, 1872 in the Young Men of Great Britain, will commence two powerfully written stories, entitled, The Scapegrace of the School, or the Adventures of Dick Lighthead, by the author of Jack Harkaway's Schooldays and Red Eagle, The War Chief of the Decotahs." This was subsequently described as "the companion story to Jack Harkaway."

Incidentally, Jack Harkaway After Schooldays had by this time reached the 29th chapter in The Boys of England. So, if Heming did not go to America until the end of 1873, there seems no doubt about which country the tale appeared in first. Anyhow, Heming plainly states in the letter reproduced, written in 1874, that the only boys tale he had written since his arrival in America was "Jack Harkaway in America."

By the way, it has always struck me that Brett abbreviated "Harkaway Among the Brigands" when he rushed (in the same number that carried the last installment of the story) his continuation of the series "America and Cuba" into print. Young Jack is safe with his parents when "Brigands" ends, but Heming takes up the Narrative in "Harkaway in America" with the boy a prisoner in the hands of Hunston. Either that or Heming had no hand at all in the later instalments of "Brigands" for this tale ended in No. 382 of The Boys of England, Mar. 7th, 1874. By this time Heming was at work in America, according to the Gilsey House Letter, for by the 25th of March he had written "Harkaway

in America," "Brigands" commenced in July 1873, in the Boys of England. To ascertain how much, if any, of "Brigands" was written by Hemyng is a pretty problem. I am inclined to the belief that the bulk of it was Hemyng's work. Still, I dare not dogmatise.

Years ago, I was positive that Hemyng had written the whole of the Harkaway series, in the new light cast on the problem by Mulhall, I am just as positive that Hemyng had nothing to do with any of the tales after Jack Among the Brigands. Certain discrepancies and anachronisms crept forth which had passed unnoticed before by my uncritical eye. Therefore was I humbled in the dust and forced to cast a little extra dirt on my beard. The greatest mistake of all occurred in Harkaway in Australia—in itself a very stupid production, written by one unversed in the history of my country—in re Balloona the wife of old Mole. She, according to this story, floated across the world after Mole had sent her up at Oxford, years before. Whoever wrote this yarn had not taken the trouble even to read Harkaway at Oxford. Had he made himself familiar with the book he would have learned that Mrs. Mole—Amberina the professor's black wife—came down a few chapters in England! To be sure it is hard to blame Hemyng's imitators for errors which he committed himself. We have an extraordinary example in the death of Cabuchon in "Harkaway on the Prairie." Cabuchon is found with a tomahawk stuck in his skull, lying in his tent. Soon after we are told that his body is miles out on the prairie, with a knife in his heart. Of all the aggravating productions in the world there is nothing which surpasses the "Hogarth House Harkaway Series," so boldly and unblushingly called "the original Harkaway Series." The set is incomplete and not even in consecutive order! The illustrations are rubbish. At least in three of the series, Harkaway in America, Out West, the Mountain of Gold and On the Prairie, have the original American illustrations; a bit mixed up, to be sure, but good. The others have old blocks from any where, including French cuts from Monte Cristo! Most tantalising, there is no finish to one of the best tales—On the Prairie; ditto Mountain of Gold.

I had on loan once from a cobber the sequels to those tales, in a small American reprint. This was many years ago, and I'd like to land them again. In this connection, you may be able to aid me. Jack Harkaway on the Prairie ends with chapter entitled 'Olalla Crosses the ice to the island on the lake,' and the sequel is announced as "Jack Harkaway and the Golden Secret." There is a spy in "Prairie" named Jerry Post, a sort of Americanised Bigamini kills his wife in the Golden Secret. Is it possible to get hold of this little volume—The Golden Secret?

All those tales mentioned by Mr. Burns as coming after Harkaway and his boy Tinker are simply parts of that tale broken up into several small stories. Spain, Turkey, Musselmans, Arabs, Counterfeitors; all occur in the full yarn as issued by Brett in the Boys of England and later in penny numbers and shilling volumes.

Consulting my copy of Vol. 4. Our Boys Journal, 1878. I transcribe the following announcement made by E. J. Brett, introducing "Young Jack Harkaway at School, and His Adventures in Search of His Father—

"...wishes readers to understand that the tale was written in America, and is one of the many brought into existence by the success of the series of English-written tales that appeared in the Boys of England. Therefore, this American story has no connection with those published in The Boys of England." A similar announcement occurs on the first page of the penny number edition, afterwards issued in shilling volumes—a set of three.

THE HISTORY OF OLD STORY PAPERS OF LONG AGO

(Taken from an ad in an old story paper)

by Ralph F. Cummings
No. 2

The New York Weekly Story Teller was a story paper called the Ladies paper par excellence, was published every Thursday morning by Norman L. Munro & Co., 28 and 30 Beekman St., New York City, for the small price of five cents per copy, or two dollars and fifty cents per annum. Few publishers have been so successful in their enterprises as have these

gentlemen, but even they acknowledge that the firm hold the New York Weekly Story Teller took upon the public heart, from its very first number greatly surprised them.

They had indeed let every means that lay in their power, prepared a favorable reception for their new venture; they had engaged the best writers for the literary department, the best artists for the illustrations, they had given their greatest attraction to the general typographical appearance of the paper, but they did not expect that the New York Weekly Story Teller would, as it has advanced with one step to the head of all the ladies journals in the country and maintain that proud position in the face of all its numerous rivals.

Its circulation was numbered by hundreds of thousands and was steadily rising with an impetus like that of the rising tide.

The causes which produced this marvelous success were easily traced.

First and foremost the general appearance of the paper produced at once a favorable impression on the reader. We venture to state that for neatness, charmness of the type, purity of paper, an attractive dress, the New York Weekly Story Teller ranks pre-eminent among all the papers on the newspaper stands.

This is an important point for a slovenly looking sheet, carelessly gotten up and full of typographical errors is sure to prejudice the readers mind and we need but mention it, call to recollection a host of papers that are deficient in the very qualities that are among the chief attractions of the New York Weekly Story Teller.

A second cause of its success will be found in the excellence of its wood-cuts artist whose skill in designing those brilliancy and delicacy of touch are instantly recognized have been engaged to draw the pictures and the best of engravers are employed to do justice to the artist's genius.

The forging cast is taking, taken from one of the pages of the Story Teller as a proof that our statements are not overdrawn. The chief cause however of the popularity of the New York Weekly Story Teller, is undoubtedly the excellence of his literary department.

We have stated that it is a ladies

paper and in selecting stories, sketches poems, etc. the publishers have been animated that a desire to secure not only the finest and best but also those that will particularly interest our fair readers of the gentler sex and yet so universal is genius in its highest flights that the letters daily received from young gentlemen testify that they also are enthralled by the tales which so powerfully appeal to the human heart.

The Standard by which all compositions that find a place in its columns are rendered is, that they must be thrilling without being blood curdling, intricate in plot without being improbable, appealing to the emotions rather than fixing the attention to the overcrowding of incidents, lively and humorous without being coarse or containing the slightest thing objectionable to even the most fastidious taste.

We admit the standard is high, and that the stories which can successfully pass such an order, must be indeed perfect, but the publishers have determined that only such stories shall find a place in the New York Weekly Story Teller. In proof of our words we refer to the really excellent stories that are running in its columns and call especial attention to the thrilling romance of "Agatha," by Eva Evergreen.

The New York Story Teller is an 8 page, size 13½x19 inches. First appeared in 1873. Although a ladies story paper, it is very scarce, and I don't know of a soul that has a copy. I have the inside 4 pages, and lucky to have that. Looks like the inside of a low number of Boys of New York. Who has a copy for sale. Write ye editor Cummings. Will give a good price.

FAVORITES OF YESTERDAY

No. 3

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

By Hermon Pitcher

Like Mary J. Holmes, Augusta J. Evans and Charlotte M. Braeme, the work of this author had a very wide fame.

She was born in Litchfield, Connecticut, educated at the village academy there, and at the age of 12, wrote compositions on profound themes, and taught Butler's "Analogy," at the age

of 14. In the year of 1832 she removed with her father's family to Cincinnati, where she was married, two years later, to Professor Calvin E. Stowe. Subsequently she made several visits to the South. She often sheltered fugitive slaves and assisted them to escape to Canada.

In 1849 she published "The Mayflower," or "Short Sketches of the Descendents of the Pilgrims;" and in 1851 while living in Brunswick, Maine, where her husband had a chair at Bowdoin College, she wrote "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It was first published serially in *The National Era*, and in 1852 appeared in book form. More than half a million copies of this novel were sold within the next five years in the United States alone, and it was translated into more than twenty European, and several Asiatic languages. More than anything else ever printed, it strengthened the feeling of hostility to slavery. It has been dramatized in many various forms, and has been widely popular.

Mrs. Stowe travelled extensively in Europe after the wonderful sale of her masterpiece. With her husband at Hartford, Connecticut, they lived during the summer in a beautiful home, and during the winter at a plantation they had bought at Mandarin, Florida, where Mrs. Stowe was treated rather coldly by the southern people, who could not forget the influence of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and the destruction it worked for the South.

Mrs. Stowe wrote many sketches of travel, and several books, some of the latter of which are "A Minister's Wooing," "The Pearl of Orr's Island," "Uncle Lot," "We are Neighbors," "Little Pussey Willow," "My Wife and I," and "Dred; a story of the Dismal Swamp."

Mrs. Stowe was a widow for many years. As old age approached her health began to fail, her brilliant mind to lose its power, and "she became as a little child, gentle, loving, forgetful, and dreamy, free from all care and sorrow, wandering about the fields in summer, picking the flowers she loved so well, and singing the old hymns with child-like joy."

She passed peacefully away at her home, surrounded by her children, on July 1, 1896.

She was a member of the most ex-

traordinary family ever produced in any century. All the children of Lyman Beecher made names for themselves in the world. Perhaps, of these, Henry Ward, and Harriet were the most famous.

NEWSY NEWS

by Reckless Ralph F. Cummings

Roy's Book Shop, 95 W. South St., Akron 11, Ohio, is offering \$7.50 for the 1st ed. of *The Hidden Mine*, by Joseph Altsheler. Some price I'll say, but guess it's well worth it.

Clyde Wakefield reported that Ernest G. Freeman, 127 Fairfield Street, Worcester, Mass., has just got out of the hospital from an operation on ulcers. He is H. H. Bro. member No. 202. Glad to hear you are on the mend, Ernie. Good luck always.

Sunday Mirror, for Aug. 13th, 1950 had a fine 2 page spread in it on the circus Big Top in color, it's beautiful.

Raymond L. Caldwell of Lancaster, Pa., had 2 fine writeups, both in *The Sunday News*, Lancaster, Pa., in July 2, and Aug. 6, 1950, on old novels, etc.

P. J. Moran of Oakland, Calif., also had a fine article on novels. The Theatre out there was featuring a Wild West production. Seems Wm. Chamberlain offered free admission for any one bringing in a Buffalo Bill dime novel, and P. J. lugged a whole arm full out for him to see. Bill was surprised as he didn't think there was a novel in existence.

Ray Caldwell's article in Aug. 6th was on a true character that was an outlaw in the early days around Lancaster. His handle was Abe Buzzard, and he featured in an issue of Old Cap Collier Library #153. Abe Buzzard's Surrender, or the Welch Mountain Detective, by Mark Merrick.

Antiquarian Bookman for July 1st and 29th, had articles on "Who Sold That?" and "Who Said That," by Jacob Blanch. Both article are on Albert Johannsens 2 books on Beadles.

J. P. Guignon of Little Rock, Ark., also had an article in the July 29th in A. B. mentioning that he's seen "many a dusky form bite the dust," in #1. Beadles Dime Novels in 1860.

Fred Orphal sent in to me, a copy of *The N. Y. Herald Tribune* for May 28th 1950, with a fine article in it, in a fine review on the 2 books on the

House of Beadle in them, with illustrations.

L. Harding, 261 St. John St., Portland, Maine, visited ye editor Cummings, saturday afternoon, Aug. 19th. He came down with his wife and another couple. This is Bro. Hardings first visit, so let's hope it isn't the last.

Ed & Tilman Le Blanc and wife were up Sunday Aug. 27th for a short visit.

Otto C. Leightner of Chicago, Ill. publisher of Hobbies Magazine, passed away June 9th at the Presbyterian Hospital, age 63 years old. He was a collector of art objects and antiques. He was buried at St. Augustine, Fla. We are all going to miss the famous hobby King, for he was king of them all. It is believed that Hobbies mag will carry on.

And George French has just lost his mother too, as she passed away Aug. 13th at Portland, Maine.

John P. Dorst, formerly of Whitingham, Vt., lost his wife a short while ago, so he is living with a son, at 82 Galvin Rd., North Adams, Mass. It's pretty tough when we lose our loved ones, and God bless them all.

Wallace H. Waldrop says that Street & Smith's Western Story Annual for 1950 on the newsstands now, has a lot of their earlier Western Stories in it. He says let's try for some Buffalo Bill's, etc.

Harry Weill says: In the letter which I wrote you on Washington's Birthday, in the paragraph relating to John de Morgan, ("Frank Sheridan"), please insert amongst the titles of historical serials, after "Philip of Mount Hope," where it chronologically belongs: "Fighting Hal, or From Fort Necessity to Quebec,"—a story of the French and Indian War.

Also the title: "Rodolfo the Gypsy, or adventures of the Golden Hours Club in the Catskill Mountains"; this should be incorporated in the 3rd paragraph, as follows: When Mr. de Morgan departed from his historical novels and wrote stories having a more popular appeal, such as "School Life at Grandcourt" and Rodolfo the Gypsy.

The paragraph on Gil Patten's stories should be revised to read: "Bicycle Ben," "The Boy Centaur, or From the Adirondacks to the Andes" (replete with local color of the various South American countries). "John

Smith of Michigan, or the Order of the Iron Ring," in which Mr. Patten clearly foresaw the impasse between Capital and Labor with which we are confronted today. "The Winged Demon, or the Gold King of the Yukon (bizarre and highly original in concept). The Crimson "Q" (a who-dun-it which would have done credit to Conan Doyle, and which held the reader in suspense as to the guilty party until its conclusion.

The above should have been added in with "A Lode of Golden Hours," published in last month's Roundup, on pages 59 and 60.

Albert Johannsen says he's had 44 fine reviews in various magazines and newspapers on his two books on the House of Beadle & Adams and their dime and nickel novels.

Bill Burns needs Frank Leslie's Boys of America Nos. 52 to end. 59 was the last number.

Who has any old fireworks catalogs from 1950 back to the good old days in the 90's or before, for sale. Want them with colored illustrations if I can get them, but will take in Black and White. Also old advertisements, circulars, etc. on fireworks. Write ye editor Cummings. I'm making up a scrap book. What have you?

Paul S. Powers, who was born in Little River, Kansas, has been writing for more than 27 years. His career began at the age of 16 as a joke writer for the Chicago Daily News which he found to be a very lucrative business. He graduated to writing about "bad men of the West," under several pen names, for Street & Smith's old "Wild West Weekly." Considered an authority on Western Americana, Powers has lived in practically every state in the Southwest. (This was sent in by Bill McCafferty.)

Geronimo's widow dies July 7, 1950—Kate Cross-Eyes died on the Mescalero Indian Reservation. She is survived by one son, Robert. Kate Cross-Eyes, third of Geronimo's wives, was believed to be 94 years old. She had lived in the reservation since 1914.

Geronimo's Apaches terrorized Arizona and Western New Mexico settlers in the 1870's and 1880's. The U. S. Cavalry could never catch him, but he finally gave himself up in 1886. He died several years later at Fort Sill,

Oklahoma. (Sent in by Ernest Belique of Saundersville, Mass.)

Clyde Wakefield, 6 Piedmont Street, Worcester 3, Mass. Has a nice copy of Frank Merriwell's Saga for \$5.00 and the two Sat. Eve. Post articles that appeared on Gil Patten and other novel writers and illustrations, price \$2.50 for these, or \$7.00 for all three, they are very rare.

Have been thinking a lot lately, what do you fellows think of a 50 or 60 page, 6x9 size, of a booklet on the Frank Tousey and his publications, with an illustration of the various ones put out, and perhaps a list of all titles, if possible, and to sell for around \$3.00 per copy. Let's know what you think of this idea, maybe I'm all wet, but want to know what you members think of it.

ODDS AND ENDS

by W. B. McCafferty

It has not been long ago that I sent an item to the ROUNDUP anent **Sherlock Holmes**, expressing at the time my desire to find some material in the way of stories, articles, write-up etc. Shortly after an article appeared in the Saturday Evening Post, I think it was, and prior to that one in the pictorial LIFE magazine. Recently I came upon "The Baker Street Journal," published by Ben Abramson, New York City. The journal is a quarterly publication with a subscription price of \$5 per year. It is chock full of articles, items, descriptions, etc. on Sherlock Holmes and his adventures, characteristics, etc., etc. In volume 2, No. 1, Henry D. Scott tells us of a football game in which Sherlock Holmes played the position of quarterback. This team was purely imaginary, and was created by Billy Phelps of Yale. The team was to be composed of literary characters. The thing that makes it interesting to old readers of the dime literature of our youth is that along with the inimitable Sherlock Holmes on this all-star team was the equally inimitable Frank Merriwell. Others on the team might not be so interesting perhaps, but to make this item complete it might be well to mention them. Mr. Scott says they were

Hiawatha and Robin Hood—Ends

Sir Launcelot and Paul Bunyan—Tackles.

Portnoy and John Ridd—Guards

Jean Valjean—Center

Sherlock Holmes—Quarterback

Achilles and **Frank Merriwell**—Half-backs.

Samson—Fullback

It might also be in place to say that Robin Hood, mentioned on this "All-time, All-literary team," has figured considerably in the old dime stories. It would have been a fine thing if, instead of Hiawatha, Mr. Scott would have used **Swiftwing**, the Indian lad and friend of Dick Merriwell on the team.

I am sure that such a team would be unbeatable to say the least.

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Pluck & Luck—990
Secret Service—989, 992, 999, 1003,
1010, 1012, 1022, 1033, 1036, 1037,
1048
Tip Top Weekly—601, 620, 633, 655, 654
673, 736
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Change of Address to

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FOR SALE

106 Novels

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Also price for entire lot.

CLOYD N. SAUTTER

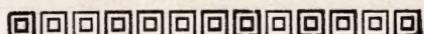
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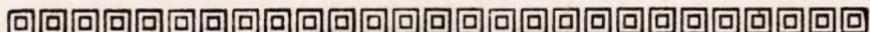


Have the following for sale or trade for similar publications—make offer: LIFE magazine, 1947, practically a complete year. PIC, CLICK, LOOK, etc. Odd numbers about 10 years old. CORONET, READER'S DIGEST, etc. Odd numbers. MYSTERY MAGAZINES, fiction, of several years back—good as ever for reading matter.

Write:

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821 Vermont St. Lawrence, Kansas





FOR SALE

All sent Postpaid

The Mercury Stories (Pub. by F. A. Brady about 1865). Title—Luona Prescott, or the Curse Fulfilled, by Ned Buntline. No back cover, and flyleaf missing. Rare. Price 75c.

Tip Top Weekly #505 515 541 594 596 597 598 728 758 781 603 609 630 648 650 652 653 672 687 688 689 690 834 839 842 843 844 a few are stamped, otherwise a very good lot. Price 75c each, or all for \$18.00.

Golden Days Vols. 10 11 12 13 14 15 and 19 in fair condition, bound in original covers. Price \$2.50 per volume or the lot for \$15.00.

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Have penny numbers, all in French, who's interested. Over 200 numbers from No. 1 up. \$3.00 takes the lot, as they are. Lots of fine reading here.

9 Henty Books in fine condition, pub. by the International Book Co. of N. Y. Bd. in green covers, and have a crossed rifles design in silver on each cover. They're nice. They are: By England Aid, For Freedoms Cause, By Pike and Dyke, The Lion of St. Marks, With Wolfe in Canada, In the Reign of Terror, Under Drake's Flag, With Clive in India, With Lee in Virginia. Price 75c each, or all for \$6.00.

Boots and Saddles, or Life in Dakota with General Custer, by Elizabeth B. Custer, wife of Gen. Custer, with portrait and map, copyrighted 1885. Pub. by Harper & Brothers, good condition, cloth bd., with bugle and sunset on the cover in gold. Price \$1.00.

6 Tom Swift Book, bd., as follows: Tom Swift and His Air Ship, Wireless Message, Electric Runabout, Electric Rifle, Land of Wonders, Sky Racer. Price 60c each or all for \$3.00.

Beadles Monthly, the complete set, bd. in 3 vols. 18 nos. in all. Bd. without wrappers on them, otherwise a very nice lot for any one to have. Vol. 1. Binding is lightly cracked on spine, not enough to hurt it. Worth \$25.00 to any one, my price is \$17.00.

Golf Made Easy, 50 Games of Cards and how to play them, Life of the Party on a good time. Price 20c each or all 3 for 50c

Have long run of Hursts Boston American sections that came out Jan. 1st, 1944 to date, think there are a few nos. missing in 1946 or 47, but not sure. 52 of these magazine sections a year for over 6 years, all in good condition, some wonderful stuff in them. Will trade or sell them for \$27.00—a fine buy to any one.

Ralph F. Cummings

Fisherville, Mass.

